

## Believe It or Not!



**Theme:** Jesus has risen. Believe it or not! Second Sunday in Easter

**Object:** A copy of Robert Ripley's "Believe It or Not." You should be able to find a copy in some form at the public library or a bookstore. If not, you can use the examples in the sermon without a copy of the book. There is also a Ripley's Believe It or Not comic book page on the internet.  
[http://comics.com/ripleys\\_believe\\_it\\_or\\_not/](http://comics.com/ripleys_believe_it_or_not/)

**Scripture:** Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." John 20:24-25

There is a very interesting book. It's called "Believe It or Not" and it was written by Robert Ripley. Mr. Ripley enjoyed collecting strange and amazing bits of information which, although they seem unbelievable, were true. He first published his amazing facts as cartoons in the newspaper, but they became so popular that they were published in book form, made into radio and television programs, and there is even a chain of "Believe It Or Not" museums. Let me read some examples of some of the amazing things you will find in his book.

Joann Barnes, a fifteen-year-old from California, once swung sixty-eight hula-hoops on her body at the same time! Can you believe that? I can't even keep one hula-hoop going. I think I would have to see that to believe it!

Listen to this one. A man by the name of James Cook once had a chicken that laid a perfectly square egg. Now, I have seen white eggs, brown eggs, even spotted eggs, but I have never seen a square egg. Have you? I think I'd have to see it to believe it!

Here's one I'll bet you didn't know. The world's largest weenie was over 3000 feet long, weighed 885 pounds, and took 103 butchers to carry it? Now that's a lot of baloney! I don't know if I believe that or not. In fact, this book is filled things that are very hard for me to believe. But do you know what? If it's true, it's true, whether I believe it or not!

On the Sunday that Jesus rose from the grave, he appeared to a group of his disciples. One of the disciples, whose name was Thomas, was not with them. When the disciples told Thomas that they had seen Jesus and that he was alive, Thomas said, "I won't believe it until I see it with my own eyes. I want to put my finger in the nail-prints in his hands — and place my hand where the spear was thrust into his side.

A week later, Thomas saw Jesus. Jesus invited Thomas to touch his hands where the nails had been. He told Thomas to put his hand in the wound in his side. Then Thomas believed! Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

A lot of people today won't believe that Jesus really rose from the grave because they haven't seen him with their own two eyes. Do you know what? It is true whether they believe it or not! You and I have never seen Jesus, we have to accept him by faith. The question is, will you believe it -- or not?

Heavenly Father, help us to accept by faith that Jesus has risen from the grave and that he is alive. Help us to believe, because it is true, whether we believe it or not. In Jesus' name we pray.

**FAITH MARCH:** Give the children some cardboard crosses to write FAITH in large letters with bright markers. Have the children march around the room with their crosses held up high, chanting a cadence: I TRUST JESUS, YES I DO! I TRUST JESUS HOW ABOUT YOU! I BELIEVE GOD'S WORD IS TRUE, I BELIEVE IT, HOW ABOUT YOU? I BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISE TRUE, HE WILL DO WHAT HE SAID HE'D DO. I BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED, ROSE AGAIN AND LIVES ON HIGH! I HAVE JESUS IN MY HEART, HE GAVE ME A BRAND NEW START.

**I BELIEVE Poster:** Glitter glue I BELIEVE on a poster and let children add happy faces and cross stickers, etc. while discussing the lesson with children! Will we be a doubter or a believer? FAITH is believing in things NOT SEEN!!

**FAITH CROSSES:** Give children construction paper, stickers and markers to make a cross and write and decorate the word FAITH on the cross, to be hung around their neck.

**BELIEVE MOBILE:** Let the class as a group, or each child separately, color the letters for B-E-L-I-E-V-E, using glitter and gel pens, etc. After the glue and glitter have dried, hang the letters from a hanger and hang in the classroom.

**PRISM FAITH:** The teacher will show the class a prism or a beveled glass or mirror. It will make a rainbow refraction. Tell children that this piece of glass is really made up of different colors (white is really made of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet).

**HAND PRINTS:** Let the children trace each of their hands onto construction paper and then glue a large black dot/circle onto each hand. Let children trace or write I BELIEVE above the hands picture. Ask children if they believe that Jesus rose from the grave.

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT GAME:** Have the children write three statements about themselves. Two of the statements should be true, and one of the statements will be false. Read the statements to the class and see if they can guess which of the statements is not true.